Volume 2

Samayamātrikā

of

Kshemendra

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NAWAB SALAR

EASTERN LOVE

VOLUMES I & II

THE LESSONS OF A BAWD

AND

HARLOT'S BREVIARY

ENGLISH VERSIONS OF THE KUTTANIMATAM OF DAMODARAGUPTA AND SAMAYAMATRIKA OF KSHEMENDRA BY

E. POWYS MATHERS

VOLUME II

*

THE HARLOT'S BREVIARY

OF

KSHEMENDRA

JOHN RODKER
FOR SUBSCRIBERS
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1. *The Mission of the Matron.*

HONOUR TO KAMA, GOD OF DESIRE, whose breath shipwrecks the flowers; by the immaterial, airy arrows which vanquish the three worlds, of Heaven and Earth and Hell! And honour also to Kālī, Goddess of Terror! For all things come to the ineluctable chasm of her mouth, to be overwhelmed in nothing. This Triple World of ours seems only an imperceptible reflection on that stormy sea, or like a little vagabond carp within it. Already that mouth has swallowed so dreadful a duration of time that even the Ancients have no count of it; for the bold and careless lust of Kālī cloaks itself in fraud against the unnumbered armies of those afflicted with a body!

The Breviary of Enchantments was made by Kshemendra for the profit of purchasable fair ones, passing from hand to hand, that they may use it as a magic book in their occulted practices. The sensuous court of Kāma, the fortunate house of games and laughter, the place of the waves of the lascivious sea which women rule: such was the exquisite city of Pravarapura in Kashmir. It was the most notable jewel with which the magnificent body of the earth is

decked. The Goddess of Joy and Beauty took her pleasure there. When the God of Desire fled from the ruining glance of the Three Eyes, or from the Abode of the Blessed, it was to Pravarapura that he came for refuge: the moving banks of the triple folds of the belly of women.

There dwelt Kalāvatī, an amiable girl and brighter than the shining of the moon: a house where the high God of Love lived in all insolence: a daughter of desire who was a magic compound for the eyes, and whose unnatural allurement put a yoke on men.

The firmness of her breast, the proud curve of her eyebrows, and the dark glowing of her eyes, these three proclaimed her trade of courtesan.

One day, as she leaned from the high places of her palace, she saw the *guru* of harlots passing, the providence of lovers, the street barber.

His face showed out from a formidable beard, his eyes had the appearance of cloudy glass, and he was obese as a musk cat gorged with the buttercups of Spring. His massive head was fringed only at its rim with hair, and shone like a polished copper pot, or like the cup of luxury where the hands of a lover wander. He came on with his nose in the air, on guard against fragments of betel spitten from the windows;

Camelneck, urged by some irresistible desire, took a good third of it upon her conscience.

'But that particular gilded vegetable holds all deceit and larceny in detestation; so Camelneck grew mortally ill, and in the end she, who had never noticed anything but gold in all the world, perished the victim of a golden root.

'In the last moments of her life the very ground seemed coloured gold to her, and the virtuous old lady went on crying still: *Pick it up, little one, pick it up!*

'Now that she has gone my house is empty, it has become a cavern of cheating; each lover does what he likes, and pulls all the coverlet over to his side.

'The great and opulent lord no longer sets his feet there, the rich man finds no further occasion to come and see me; for, as a deserted hut is infested by vagabonds, so am I infested by the mob of my lovers, and have to go into the city to make my meetings.

'I have had enough of this disorder. For how shall I, who ever held the scales equal for all men, endure to be at the mercy of one or two?'

Thus she gave form to her thoughts, while the tears ascended to her eyes; the barber had heard her in silence; now, when he had calmed her a little, he answered sighing:

'Dear mistress, it was your own greed and your

insensate blundering which introduced this doctor, this villainous girl-hunter, to your house.

'A cure which succeeds with harlots would utterly destroy a respectable woman like your mother. What, did you not know that this doctor is the death of bawds ?

'When he goes out to hunt the sick, every girl's parasite and flunkey bows in respect at his passage, with flattering murmurs : *All honour to Yama, the King of Justice, the Reaper of Life, the God of Death ! Pest is the pest of bawds ! May his rope choke them all !*

'Shake off your grief, lift up your heart in masculine resolution ; find a new mother, fertile in resources, and place her at the head of your household.

'Lovers grow very soon as bold as wolves where there is no mother to mount guard, to spy upon them like a tigress, to know what they eat, and count the drinks they drink.

'When a girl no longer has a mother, she wanders blindly here and there, without a plan or clue, and does not know a minute's peace from night till morning.

'As a cat settles upon the hearth in the winter, so settles the evil youth in the house of the daughter of desire who lacks a mother.

'Lovers with threadbare hearts incrust the house when its mother has left it ; if you touch

on the question of money and speak to them or their bills, they whistle carelessly, but can do little else.

'A terrace without thorns, a public girl without a matron, a king without his ministers: it is through these that sycophancy and flunkeydom grow fat.

'Now is the time to heap up gold, O girl with eyes of the blue lotus; the gracious curve of your proud breast must win you happiness.

'The roguish years have a swift wing and come not back. There are a few short breaths when your delights are at their full: oh, profit by them!

'The first glimmer of youth and sprays surcharged with blossom, fade like a dream.

'While there is yet time, O sulky fair one, pluck flowers in the gold garden. While there is yet time lay hold of another mother, skilful to bend in every gale of lies. Here, in the dawn of your blossoming, child of exquisite eyebrows, here lies the battlefield where you must conquer; this is the Spring of age, when boys carve out their life and daughters of desire their fortune.

'I know a certain woman who, from her birth, has ever marched breast forward; and she is a talisman of power against those men who bind themselves about the beauty of girls, as ivy round a tree. Now listen carefully to the story

NAWAB SALAF [illegible] BAHADUR.

2. *The Perfect Courtesan.*

KANKA AT ONCE BEGAN HIS TALE, AND Kalavati listened to it with grave attention, for it was the story of a bawd most fertile in the finest kind of shift and artifice.

'There was once a woman called Bhūmikā,' he said, 'who kept an inn at Parihāsapura, and bore a daughter whom she named Arghagharghātikā.

'As the child was rather tall and had delightful looks, the simple folk of the neighbourhood asked her to all their feasts; and the little thief repaid them by filching the holy vases from their houses.

'When she was only six years old, though full of talk already, her mother, who hungered for money, set her up for sale at the country fair.

'Behold her, then, already armed for conquest of a lover, and not afraid of kisses, wearing a pearl collar ornamented with round cockle-shells, and tightly laced into a little jacket which had been basely provided with false breasts.

'A young merchant called Purnaka, who had come into the town to purchase saffron, passed by the place where she stood for sale, a handsome fellow, sewn all over with gold and most imposing.

'After this it was necessary for her to change her name and residence once more, so she called herself Nāgarikā, and became the mistress of a gentleman farmer at Pratāpapura.

'This calm existence and the abundant luxury of an excellent table soon made her fat, and she became as dear to her lover as Hidimba to Bhīmasena.

'As soon as she had obtained complete power over the disposition of all his money, she prayed for a swift death to free her from her victim, and, in the meanwhile, for want of anything better, succeeded in alienating him from all his family.

'One day he was found clubbed to death in his father's orchard, so she profited by her strong position in the house to become the mistress of the father himself, whose name was Shrīsimha. As he had no other children, this old man was a quarry very well worth hunting.

'Aware that her youth was passing and wishing to oust all the rest of her decrepit lover's women, she took pains to enthrall him by the use of magic plants.

'At the same time she re-awakened his juvenile ardour by the judicious use of fish soup, milk, liquified butter, garlic, onions, and other virile adjuvants.

'But when the old man, who feared the wrath

to follow her husband to the tomb.

'His blood relations were hard put to it to move her from this crotchet of hers, which was all the stronger because it rose out of a hypocritical calculation only. She would speak to them in a deep voice and with a resolved and noble air : *Widowhood in a fine family, the slur a woman's reputation takes from it, and the vexations which follow after : all these will soon depart from me with the flames of the pyre.*

'Thus would she speak, and be as constant in her resolution, as careless in the face of death, as if she were made of stone. But she found it very difficult to conceal her joy at having entered into so mighty an inheritance ; and this difficulty was the measure of what she really felt.

'When the property had become legally hers through a decision of the crown, she let herself be dissuaded out of her funereal resolve by the King's people, and lived thenceforward in joy and feasting and entertainment.

Soon she captured the scribe of the royal stables, himself a veritable stallion in the game, and thus stayed among the living to scatter ruin and death.

'She clung like a leech to her new conquest, and charmed her lover daily in the bath-house with the sparkling prettiness of her chatter.

'The scribe, who had his own considerable complement of assurance, spent all his day in pillaging his master, and then, when he had eaten and drunken like a Kumbhakarna in the evening, slept like one also. Every morning the woman lavished her expert cares of the bath upon him and showed him demonstrations of devotional respect, while he lay in the water and tried to cool his spirit-heated blood.

'As she was growing old and had no child, and as those which the scribe had begotten on another woman were beginning to be grown up, she applied herself to the exploitation of this man as to a pious work, and laid up a considerable treasure in secret by turning everything in the house to ready money.

'In the end the man's sons revolted at this wholesale disappearance of the furnishing of their father's house, and to prevent further depredation laid hands on all that was left. But the woman did not hesitate to bring the matter before the courts, and at once laid siege to the heart of a lawyer who thereupon took up her case.

'Thanks to this man, who bribed a settlement in her favour, she gained the victory, and the goods in question were restored to her.

'At once she hastened to realise money upon the house and all that was in it, and, fleeing in

disguise from the wrath of her lover's sons, took refuge in a convent of Satkas.

'She dyed her white hair black, made her face shine with paints and unguents, and established herself in that place as a harlot recently launched upon the trade.

'She gave out that she had held an honourable position in the business world and, by the attraction of this, made brisker dealings with her body.

'Her clients never questioned the truth of what she said, for they were ever ready to meet a thing half way, and, being delighted by the tales she told of the commercial life, ran after her more and more.

'So she discovered the joy of turning heads again, and, though her tongue and lips and hands were already worn by drinking the cup of peace with lovers, she savoured it even more.

'At length, however, when she had received stolen goods from certain robbers, she was arrested on the information of her traitorous servants, and, because she insisted on denying the evidence, was loaded with chains and cast into prison.

'There she quickly seduced a gaoler, whose name was Bhujanga, into the snares of her love, and thenceforward dwelt in unclouded happiness, spending her time in a conscientious

clearance of fish and cakes and honey.

'Once, when the two were alone together, she held her lover in a deep embrace and covered him with kisses; then, as he grew drunk on these, she bit out his tongue with her teeth as the first stage in her bid for liberty.

'The man could not cry out, so she waited till he had swooned away and then dressed him as a woman in her own clothes, removed her chains, and fled.

'She came by night to Vijayeshvara, and passed herself off, under the name of Anupamā, as the daughter of a powerful minister.

'In this city she was able, thanks to the love of Bhogamitra, to deck the poor remnants of her once exceptional beauty with loads of precious stones. She carefully raised her breasts, and put on a long wig; she adorned herself with a pale red turban, she bestowed an honest layer of collyrium upon her eyes, and covered her face with a nose veil. Thus she succeeded in impressing the simple folk of that place, until they cried: *What fairylike creature is this that has come among us!*

'One of these admirers was stricken by irresistible desire; but, when he had seen her naked for a single moment, he never afterwards dared even to pass the corner of her street.

'As a cooled gallery in winter, as a range of

lamps at noon, as a crown of withered flowers, so is an old whore useless to every man.

'Since no customer would take her bait, she contented herself with approaching strangers under cover of the darkness and dragging them with her by the skirts of their clothing; thus she was able to procure a meagre salary each night.

'Later, as a penitent named Shikhā, she associated herself with a male penitent called Bhaairavasoma; and he shared the food of his mendicancy with her.

'Yet again she livened her regard with collyrium, and wore a clear circlet of crystal roses about her neck, and laced her arms and breasts magnificently below a garment fitting without a wrinkle: thus, when she sought alms, she still disseminated illusion and excited fools.

'But a famine came and it grew impossible to live by begging; so one night she stole the adornment of his holy images from the penitent and disappeared.

'Then this woman, though ignorant of every limit of immortality, sought refuge in the Buddhist cloister at Krityāshrama. She became a nun, under the name of Vajraghantā, and stayed without movement, plunged in ecstacy. She held a begging bowl in the crook of her hand, and offerings fell within it: a begging

bowl, the symbol of all virtue! She wore a torn old rag of red about her shoulders, a worthy parallel, had men but known it, of the feigned ardours she had shown her lovers in the past. Her head, which had once been proclaimed the resting place elect of admiring eyes, had now become like a ripe pumpkin; she shaved a great tonsure upon it to win her pious gifts.

'This subtle old creature now carried her message of evil, fraud, and corruption from door to door; for women of the great houses would come assiduously to bow before her, that she might spell out their future in the magic circle.

'As she ever had love charms in her bag for daughters of desire, magic ways of getting rich for the use of merchants, and conjurations and spells for the benefit of the foolish, she soon succeeded in winning a fine consideration.

'But, by lying with a slave of a certain Buddhist adept, she became with child, and this bodily accident was a great hindrance to her traffic in hypocrisy.

'She was now forbidden to live on alms and dragged an enormous belly about with her; therefore, as soon as she was brought to bed, she hastened to abandon her infant and return to the city.

'She provided herself with another wig, and told her tale so skilfully that, when the minister Mitrasena had a son, she was taken in to nurse it.

'She led a tranquil life there, under the name of Ardhakshīrā, and sat in wait on a lion-footed stool, with her nursling in her arms, spying out ways to make one mouthful of the whole house.

'As she received a most substantial diet, in order that her nurse's milk might not be spoiled, she lived in the minister's mansion like a fighting cock.

'A collar of corals shone about her neck, her ears were gay with silver rings, and heavy metal balls glowed gloriously down the length of both her arms; a strip of woollen fabric fell to her heels from the compact upper parts of her high rump; she put on great flesh, owing to her generous diet, and regained something of her former carriage in these opulent days of her nursing.

'But as she was for ever stuffing herself with what came to hand, it followed at length, from such indulgence, that the child was attacked by fever. The doctor ordered a course of fasting for the nurse, and she now had to content her leisure with a vast inglutition of fish soup.

'*You must be careful of the water you drink*, ordered the doctor, *and there can be no question of*

heavy and heating foods. For two or three days you must not, as you love the child, take more than an infusion of herbs. Then the boy will live ; and think how pleasantly you may take part in the numberless feasts which will be given in his honour ! So said the doctor, but she turned a deaf ear to him.

'When she saw that the child grew no better, and because her love for him was lighter than a straw, she fled in the night, taking all his gold-embroidered binders along with her.

' After this, she changed her name again, and, settling down in a remote and desolate land, devised a fine business of goat breeding.

' But a terrible storm fell upon the forest and destroyed each thing within it ; her fortune was swept away, and there remained no more of her flock, as there remained no more of her wretched body, than the skin. So she laid hold of the thick woollen underclothing which her shepherd had intrusted to her care, and sold it in the city of Avantī ; she bought cakes with the price of it, and established herself as a cake-seller, under the title of Tārā.

' She bought up a basket of old pastry, which had been given in offering to the idols, cooked it again in the oven, and went about the streets selling it for new.

' She used a great quantity of rice in her new business, and the housewives let her have it on

credit, at a very high rate of interest. But after they had hugged themselves for some weeks to think of the enormous profits they were going to make, they ended by finding that they could even whistle for their capital.

'After this she called herself Kushalikā and went round with an itinerant seller of liquified butter, begging from door to door for such sums as would allow the girl's wedding to take place.

'Under the style of Panjikā she haunted the gaming houses, selling cogged dice and counterfeit money.

'As Mukulikā, the flower-seller, she sold blossoms for offering before the idols; but once, when she had spent the sums which the keepers of the temple gave her to purchase her stock, she fled at nightfall, leaving them without flowers or money.

'She assumed the name of Himā and distributed fresh water to the folk at village festivals, but she would always manage to slip away in time, and take the bracelets of the dancers at the booths along with her.

'Then she adopted the name of Varnā, and read the stars; she turned aside evil influences, thwarted the six disasters, and, in her capacity as marriage broker, made and unmade attachments by spreading false reports.

name to Kalā, opened a drinking stall, and for a full three days did a brisk trade in maddening liquors.

'One night she subtilized the seven little bells from a holy ascetic, as he lay deeply sleeping off his drink.

'Afterwards, when certain travellers lost consciousness through taking a spirit which was too full of thorn-apple, she packed up all their possessions and fled through the night to Shūrapura.

'There, as a matter of convenience, she married a porter; but, when he lay dead in sleep after his hard day's work, she would always leave him and pass the night with someone else; yet this did not prevent her, in the morning, from girding up her high broad haunches across their narrowest part with a long cord, and cheerfully carrying the heaviest burdens upon her head all day.

'Journeying later over the desolate mountains, by wet and slippery paths, abrupt and deep in snow, she came one evening to the convent of Panchāladhārā, where she introduced herself as Bambā, a lady of high breeding, and let it be seen that she wished to stay there awhile. . . . Eventually, in the depths of winter, she went forward, her face muffled in her garment, and tormented by the cold. She wore a thick

woollen covering which fell to her heels, and seemed a very miserable little old woman indeed in those days.

'In her further wanderings she called herself Satyavatī, a Brahman woman, and as such she passed over the whole earth: the sea surrounds it as a belt, and the jewels of the belt are little islands.

'Wherever she went, she contrived consideration for herself: in one place because she knew the words of Yoga, in another by displaying her fasts and macerations, in a third by boasting that she had undertaken a circular pilgrimage to bathe herself in the most notable sacred rivers.

'By determining the position of sun and moon, and the direction of the wind, by observing the bright variations of the comets as a means of reading the future, she beguiled the confidence of fools, and assured herself profit even in kings' palaces.

'*I myself will paralyse the army of your foes!* When she had made such a promise, she would pack the gold, which she had extorted for her service, in a portable form, and preside over the beginnings of the battle. But, as soon as the disorder became great enough, she would disappear into the dust and darkness.

'As she went on her way, she chattered of her

pilgrimage to Kedāra, of her sacrifices at Gayā, her baths in the Ganges, and of all her other works of piety. She showed herself off as a witness of the blessings which follow such deeds, and thus could always obtain a gift of money from the rich and well-disposed.

'*A thousand years have already passed over my head,* she would declare, *I know the highest secrets of alchemy; the magic words, in all their infinite and delicate complexity, are at my service; I hold in my hand the essence of each desirable thing in the Three Worlds.* By means of such fantastic boasting she would reduce the good landowners in country places to the condition of dogs licking the soles of her feet; and at the same time, to feed her personal pride, she would contrive to minimise the veneration due to the truly virtuous. She was an extraordinary woman.

'After she had visited the farthest shores of the world, and had obtained unheard of triumphs through her increasing culture in love's jugglery, she returned to her own country, bringing no other fortune than her withered form. There is no man, however low he may have fallen, who will renounce the land of his birth: it is as native to him as the body is!

'Though she was entirely decrepit and utterly disfigured, and in spite of her lies and boasting,

I recognised her by the little dark blue beauty spot upon her forehead.

'If this chosen among women, this ravenously rapacious bawd, this dragon of the pay-desk, is willing to become the mother of your wasted house, then rest assured, O slim young girl, that all the riches of the world of love will fall, for the asking, into your small hand.

'I will go to her now, for she knows all the tricks and shifts and secrets of the trade, she has the whole vast science of pimping at her finger-ends, and I wish to make certain that you get her; only so will your feet be set upon the road to colossal fortune. But why should I waste time in speaking further of her? Surely her wit could be matched against the world! She is the perfect solution of your life, my child!'

Thus spake the barber in the fullness of his excellent counsel, and then departed with great haste.

3. *A Night in the Market of Love*

AS SOON AS THE FRIENDLY BARBER had undertaken to fetch this mother of all riches, this mother of whom daughters of desire would dream, whom nature had marked out from earliest time to be a leech upon the burnings hearts of lovers, a sleepy lassitude fell upon the other courtesans, for they feared that they would lose her bold, magnificent help. The lord of day, spending his golden treasure slowly, had well-nigh come to the end of his course upon the air, and for a moment dipped his burning globe in the red dwellings of twilight.

Then, driven from this West of swiftly passing light, the flaming god died in his love pangs, and his glorious head was drowned below the sea.

Now the half moon glittered in the airs of evening, an ivory disk dropped from the ear of some celestial harlot as she fought with another in a bawdy brawl. And, when the lunar god, the snow-rayed lover of the Night, rose in the East, the earth trembled with rapture and made herself ready for love's festival.

Then the wooers, who had done nothing during

to slip forth and be polite to him for a moment. Others, whose regular customer had not arrived and who had refused some newcomer for his sake, now noisily mourned their double misadventure.

Still others tried to persuade those clients whom they had sucked dry and put to the door, and who had now received some new inheritance, that it was their mother who had forced them to do this thing. *If she cannot see that you are the very cream of gallants, I shall no longer cling to tragic life,* they said.

Yet others, and these the cleverest, kept up their game with some protector, whom it was their custom to tantalize with refusal, so that, when they deigned to throw him one kind word, even at the height of his anger, he would be ready to cast his fortune at their feet.

In some houses the bawds were ranting at amorous tricksters, who had once been dismissed and then found means to come in again under false names; and they were so angry that their voices sounded like the clatter of rattles.

One little house, crammed full of women, was boarded by a whole army of drunkards, who lay and slept upon the floor; so that one of the girls, who had found a friend, was forced to take him to a neighbour's dwelling.

Some women stood with their faces out of doors, as if to call the wandering cat, and sent quick glances into the far shadows, hoping for the appearance of their favourite customer.

The first has not gone yet, the second is already here, the third, who has engaged to come, is most unpleasant; he is exacting, jealous and brutal; he has a headlong taste for me; what shall I do? This is what certain girls were saying to their mothers.

The night is long, the lover lusty, and my little girl is still extremely young. Weighed down by this consideration, a whole phalanx of old women were racking their brains for clever diversions with which to waste a lover's time.

At our house, cried another, inwardly furious that her beds stayed empty, *we do not take money from strangers, especially as there are so many gipsies on the road just now.*

In other houses where the lover, in spite of a special invitation, had shown so little sense of his own dignity as to come without any money, the girls were weeping over imaginary colics, or admitting in desolation to providential headaches.

Elsewhere, to excite the generosity of their own customers, the bawds talked in unwearying praise of certain prodigals, whom they could see throwing money out of windows in the same street.

We are ashamed to be so poor! ruined young men would cry, and fall into ecstacy before the great fortunes of more substantial lovers.

My daughter is the permanent mistress of a magistrate's son, and would court a very great danger if she went with you. Thus spoke a bawd as she led an admirer into a quiet corner where the girl was waiting, and charged him triple tariff for her feigned betrayal.

That is not enough! Are you making fun of us? Are you not ashamed to offer so little to a wonderful woman like my daughter? It is not as if you were one of our regular clients. We have never seen you before. So cried another old woman, as she clung to the robe of a miser and would not let him go.

An ancient harpy lied in this wise to an unfortunate young man, who was no longer rich because he was still a lover: *A minister's son has taken my daughter for an outing. Be patient a little, as you love me; tomorrow she shall be yours.*

Takka, my usual lover, will not give as much as he should, if he comes here and does not find the place unoccupied. Yet if we annoy this disobliging general, he will never visit us again. And how can I make the expenses of the house if I do not let the author have his hour? Thus one woman complained to a friend, as they lay in wait at the head of a blind-alley.

The other women suck silver from their dupes by every sort of means; and every self-respecting man allows himself to be cozened, even when he sees through their contrivances. How can my upright nature contend against such creatures? With such words a woman was drawing her cord more tightly about a noble-minded lover.

Last night passed like a flash of light in the midst of great pleasures; now, after a day of feverish waiting, I return and am refused her couch. So, in a circle of mocking, questioning gallants, a discomfited lover told the sorrowful tale of his victimisation by some fine and artful procuress.

The reason you see no lovers at my house by day is that all my dealings are with serious people, and their important preoccupations give them no moment from morning till night to think of trivial things. When the night comes, my admirers cluster about me and woo me. But they are respectful in their worship, platonic and virtuous in their loves, and purely celebrate my beauty, grace, and wit. Our affair goes no further than gallant bouts of sprightly conversation. I live most modestly, and discreetly take the little money that I need from an intimate friend, as just remuneration. Thus spoke a courtesan to check the cackle of friends and rivals who were doing better business.

Put on your pearl collar, Taralikā! . . . Do not forget your two bracelets, Manoharā! . . . Your

belt is falling, Lilā, gird it more tightly! . . . Do not economise the sandal, Chitrā, for the night is dark!

Thus troops of friends, out of the
treasury of their experience,
advised the courtesans.

4. *A venal philosophy.*

AND NOW THAT MAGNIFICENT PROCURess, that fitting instrument in all equivocal traffic, arrived in company with the barber; and you would have said that it was night escorting the shadows. The old woman was but a packet of bones fastened together by sinew: her guts were clinging to the skin of her belly; she was a ghost regarmented in illusion, a withered skull and skeleton.

Her body consisted of holes wrapped up in hide, a cage where universal falsehood lived, like a decoy bird.

Her jaws were ever open to crush and swallow all that her victims had; she was the predestined balance, announced by a thousand signs, to weigh the Three Worlds' evil.

She was normal with those whose estate was normal, she was wicked with the wicked, humble with the humble; she had been fashioned and sent into the world to conduct the music of pretended loves; she showed long and terrible teeth, and was as fearful to the sight as a bitch when the quarter corpse she has been gnawing is snatched away.

She had an owl's head, a crow's neck, and the

eyes of a cat: she was a collection of disparate members, borrowed from various beasts, eternally at war against each other.

She was without parallel in her kind, the perfect guardian for a troupe of courtesans; she was vowed to the use of the sacred alchemy of the passions, and to leave the martyred bodies of lovers no refuge except the death's-head staff of the ascetic.

As soon as Kalāvatī beheld this occasion of lovers' tears, this black smoke from the bright fire of feminine immodesty, she rose in deferential haste, threw herself at the old woman's feet, and then, after seating her in her own chair, began, with a thousand notable signs of honour, to sing her praises:

'You are the veritable Brahma of a girl's training, and, by the infinite variety of your art, its Vishnu also; and, above all, because of your battling with penniless lovers, you are its terrible Shiva. You hold the power of full divinity: creation, consolation, and destruction.

'O mother, there are women with gazelle's eyes who dazzle all men by the magic brightness of their beauty and the flower of their youth, leading them to expect a love productive each day of novel joys; but even such cannot win to the goal of their desires without your teaching.

'Therefore receive me into your love, for I appoint myself your daughter; I place myself in your hands, and flee to you as a refuge. Surely a delicate soul like yours will lend her sympathy and support at the first onset? I ask no better than to give myself.'

Hearing herself besought so sweetly by Kalāvatī, seeing her life already assured with comfort, and a large existence opening up before her, this man-eating spectre, this ancient vampire, answered:

'Daughter, you have the love of my heart already; though you were born to me without pain, and I carried you not upon my breast, it is great satisfaction to me to take you as my child.

'It was Kanka, my good and lifelong friend, it was Kanka who came to speak of you to me; Kanka who sewed up my nose so often when the gallants slit it.

'You are the dreamed and elected vase for my instruction, O woman worthy of the gods; for a picture must be painted upon fine fabric if it would truly please the eye.

'First hear the broad principles of the art, my daughter. I can show you the general method which leads to success, but the treasures of experience and practice can only come after assiduous exercise in the science.

'It is not by a high birth, virtue, beauty, or knowledge, but by intelligence alone, that we achieve those riches which are worth more than life itself.

'The thing most greatly and most notably lacking in this world is that reflective and clear sight which leads to the purposed end. I am old enough to be sure of this, that the great universe is full of foolish sheep, fit only for the shearing.

'This ignorance of means adapted to the circumstance, of means which allow themselves to be used and moulded, as a doctor uses and moulds a disease which he is gently ripening day by day, this inability to master chance, is common to the Triple World, to gods and men and devils. They are poor creatures all, and especially poor in wisdom.

'To consider Brahma, the supreme godhead: why did he do his work with so little forethought that the young magnificence of the proud breasts of virgins is as fugitive, alas, as light? With what discernment in craftsmanship can we credit a creator so blind that he never thought of filling pumpkins with that oil which now we have so painfully to extract from grains of sesame? Why did he not think to provide a good wool covering for certain beasts, when he had gone so far as to give them imposing sets of teeth for their defence?

'Vishnu himself was constrained to complicated and peculiar tasks to obtain the jewels which he coveted. Yet it would have been enough for him to have created your amiable curves all moulded of lying love; then would the treasures of the world have fallen at your feet for him. How could so great a god fail of so simple an idea?

'And how could Shiva, who had renounced all the vanities of the world and sprinkled his body with ashes, how could Shiva, the patron of penitents, unite himself bodily with his love in the public sight? What even passable thing could we look for in so contradictory a being?

'Not one person in the Three Worlds has a grain of clear good sense; but each blindly obeys the fatal spell of the Karma of his former lives and runs, through a thousand painful efforts, to the goal which Destiny has marked for him.

'What, then, can be said of the unfortunate women, in a world where all the men are so exquisitely obtuse? Except to conciliate their imbecile indulgence, there is no way of livelihood for us, whether we be bawds or daughters of desire.

'The fool sleeps in his faith, though all beneath his eye is other than he thinks: deceit and jugglery in everything, that is our power.

'In this world of woman's men there is a

treasure especially created for street singers and courtesans, the need and habit of fools to cling to women.

'Once in the prime of my youth the son of a Brahman came frequently to my house, in a desire to lie with me.

'Now when I saw that he was exceedingly strong, through too great continence no doubt, and was stuffed with health, and shining with youthful vigour, I thought in consternation:

'*The boy is too robust, and the night too long. I am already worn out by other lovers, I am feeble and good for nothing. How can I keep his respect, and yet balk him of those satisfactions which are now his due? Let me try to gain time at least.*

'So, as soon as I saw the moment approaching when I could not, for decency, defer the sacrifice, I plunged into lively conversation with the youth; but finished by saying, so that he might think himself responsible:

'*Leave me in peace! What are you telling me! There is nothing new in that! This is the twentieth time that my ears have been wearied by that tale! I am dying of sleep!* And then I began again, on another theme, pressing him with questions and chattering like a magpie.

'After this, when I had come to my wit's end for conversation, and yet still desired to escape his muscular embrace, I began to utter lament-

able cries, and told him that a terrible colic had attacked and was torturing my entrails.

'At once the young fool, who was quite dazed by his own ridiculous self-confidence and imbecile cult of truth, set patiently to work to rub away the colic.

'And while he sweated blood and water, with meritorious zeal, in kneading me from top to toe, the minutes flowed by gently, and the night, as if she had been in the secret with me, passed like the wink of an eye.

'Day came while he had still done nothing upon me, for the silly boy had been properly cheated by my colic.

'Yet, though he was as stupid as a ram, it seemed certain that he would ask me to give him back the fourfold wages he had already paid. How could I answer him, for it was too certain that he had had no pleasure for his money?

'It would be prudent not to go too far, I thought, and therefore it became urgent that he should have some little taste, in some way or another, of the pleasures I withheld. If he picked up the crumbs, the poor leavings of love's feast, surely a young man of such excellent refinement would not insist upon his right to be repaid?

'Urged by such thoughts, I began to thaw a

little in the dawn, and gave him certain frank and sincere kisses, as if I loved him, by way of quittance.

'At this the poor boy, who was already firm in the toils, became quite confused at the advantage he thought he was taking, and again found patience to pity me. He even began delicately to exhort himself not to abuse my goodness by indiscretion.

'It became necessary, therefore, for me to bring his almost too great guilelessness to heel, and I cried, in the midst of my hypocritical chatter:

'*My dear, my dear, the contact of your limbs induces a most extraordinary sensation: one feels as if one were being touched by amrita, the food of the gods! Even now I have received a certain proof of this:*

'When your secret limb touched on those heights which are the throne of an amorous delectation in women, my belly-ache vanished away, I know not how! Surely it was a reward of merit in my past lives that you were permitted to enter here to-day!

'But no sooner had he heard these words than his eyes were filled with tears. He was sipping the pleasure of love when suddenly grief checked him, and his heart was narrowed with regret. He beat his breast and forehead with his hand, and cried: *Alas! I am lost! I am lost! What a misfortune!* And then he said to me:

'Why did I not know sooner that the contact of my limbs was as a precious stone, a talisman, a magic herb, touching the colic of women?

'I have failed in the highest duty of my life! My mother, the kindest of all mothers, suffered from obstinate colics, O all-beautiful, and they laid her in the tomb.

'If only I had know this certain cure in time, death had not ravished her away from me.

'Then weeping, and crying: *I have committed a fatal fault!* he hurled himself from the house, and, but for his human form, it was as if a bull without horns were running away from me.

'There are men in the world who lack all power of thought, who are driven, invincibly and always, to debauch and connection; for these they neglect all other things; their life has but one joy and one idea, to be wetting their whistle, or burying themselves in women. The fools come of their own accord, and without one moment of reflection, to lay their heads, as if in the hands of a friend, upon a breast which feels no other desire than to ruin and leave them naked.

'Thus youth is wasted in enterprises of a varying success, but the getting or keeping of a fool's money is the crux of each.

'Courtesans can live by insincerity alone; their very profession banishes them from the

light of the truth. Through truth they fall on ruin, as well-born ladies fall by spirituous drink.

'At the house of a girl of luxury, truth turns into destruction; the harlot's splendour is, in its essence, but lies and illusion; when her inner being is set out naked in the light of truth, it is seen to be beggared and empty, and no more worthy of a visit than the huts of the poor.

'The merchant kills himself if he be generous, the girl if she let her heart or lips become sincere, just as the master will perish through humility, and the author if he be capable of compassion.

'The connoisseur rejoices at the tricks and juggling of a courtesan, as at those of a mountebank. *Well done!* he cries, as if he were at the play. *What excellent corruption! That is really extremely good!*

'One day, when I had passed over all this earth, surrounded in her belt of waves, greed led me back to the city of Pātaliputra, to the places where daughters of desire most congregate.

'When the bawds of that city, who know all that there is to know, perceived my feeble merit, they became jealous and with jesting and laughter would have humbled me.

'Therefore, to hold out against their efforts, I

sat down to face the holy image of Ganesha, fasting, and in a swoon.

'Then Ganesha, the son of Shiva, appeared to me in a dream, asking: *How many days of your fast are already accomplished?*

'So I falsely displayed the convulsions of agony before him, and answered, without moving a muscle: *Two months have passed since I began, because of a vow, to refrain from eating.*

'Then Ganesha, who indeed knows all things, deigned to smile upon me, and cry: *Even under a vow, even in sleep, you do not forget your lying. I am pleased with you, my beautiful one, because you are inflexible in the path of falsehood. Your power of staging grandiose comedy shall be a source of inexhaustible rejoicing to you. This is my promise.*

'Such were his favours upon me, because by insincerity alone may women arrive at wealth and happiness.

'The capital thing is money! Gold is the living soul of man, and particularly of princes and the gazelle-glancing girls who people the houses of pleasure: this is why it is necessary for both to be exercised in conquest.

'It is by riches that we attain understanding, and by understanding that we attain riches: in this low world, riches and understanding are but conditions of each other.

'A man with a fortune is the Brahma and the Vishnu and the Shiva of the earth; a man with nothing is like Rāhu, soulless and bodiless; he is heavy and idle like Shanaishchara; and like Vakra, who is devoted from his birth to the lower place.

'Even absurdity appears agreeable in a man of good birth whom fortune has chosen for her dwelling, just as the absurdities of a drunkard seem agreeable.

'This world is very fond of knowing men with great purses, for their contact is like that of sandal, fragrant and charming to the senses, even of those who have no owner's right in it.

'The most terrible swords grow friendly to those on whom felicity has smiled; but his own hairs turn rough and churlish against the man with nothing.

'Through fortune a man rises to mental distinction, for he can pay to surround himself with wise men; to the height of a hero for he can purchase excellent soldiers; and to nobility, for he can buy alliance with old and illustrious houses. Every advantage of life makes up a cohort of folly in the footsteps of fortune, for they depend on her, though she is independent. Let us esteem this fortune, then, for it is the root of happiness, and let us be very careful never to become endeared to any other thing.

'Hasten to grow rich, for this commerce with the body, which needs must have youth and beauty for its escort, has but one season. The splendour of youth has the brightness of Spring, for the body rises gloriously like a new-born spray; it has the nocturnal charm of Autumn, because its face holds the mysterious light of the moon; and it has the spreading life of the season of rains, for its moving breasts tumble like the waves of a stream; but it passes, it passes.

'Our joy in the drunkenness of youth stays but a little time; it is a wandering joy and roves like the bee about the lotus faces, it rests like an antelope between the little hills of a girl's breast, it burns upon her gallant croup like a favourite peacock, it swims like a royal swan upon the gracious waves of the lifted river of her belly.

'And when this youth, which lovers love so much, has gone like a fool's inheritance, then the fine light of a courtesan dwindles indeed.

'Dear daughter, avoid the pride which says: *My beauty is marvellous!* for the peacocks in the forest, with their glittering splendours, grow thin and pine; and the crows which fatten on the offerings given to the birds of heaven are wiser far than they.

'Your brows have the sweet curve of Kāma's flowery-arrow-shooting bow; the disk of the

moon is ashamed before the brightness of your face; your lip has stolen her deep red from the pomegranate; the sweep of the curve of your body is divine elixir–need I add more praises than these, O girl of fair haunches?–and yet, if you will not obey the instructions of reason, you are no more likely to attain your goal than an elephant blinded by rutting.

'The shining of the smile upon your lips is like a coral flower seen swaying beneath the water; but however painfully you marshal all your graces, they will not lead to fortune's happy conquest without the subtle tact of knowledge to support them.

'The most desirable, amorous, and perfect beauty cannot shine amid the darkening cares which follow poverty; also, as an excellent poet has well said, the girl who can command fortune is a delight to all men.

'O child of excellent eyebrows, a girl who can be intoxicating wine to those who love her, and a goddess of beauty and happiness to those who buy her, a nectar to the opulent, and a poison to those whose goods have gone up in smoke, may dazzle the gods themselves.'

Kalāvatī had harkened greedily to the words of the old woman, and now she said:

'Mother, will you teach me the ways which lead to riches?'

5. *A lesson in love-tactics*

THEN THE OLD WOMAN PREACHED all the doctrine of feminine diplomacy, by virtue of which, as tame elephants are loosed to enchain the wild ones, beauty may snare her gallants when they are drunken with love.

'Because I feel towards you as a mother, dear child, I will teach you, if you will listen, a secret essential at all times and places to bring an intrigue to its right conclusion.

'Before all else you must take pains to discover the exact gradation of a lover's feeling. When we have pierced the particular passion of a man, then, and not till then, can we know whether to show him the door, or strongly take him in hand.

'Now the eight shades of love which can be distinguished by colour are these: cobalt love, vermilion love, saffron love, carmine lac love, madder love, orange-coloured love, carrot-tinted love, and indigo or dark blue love.

'The forms of love which imitate the elements are these: gold love and copper love, brass love and lead love, iron love, diamond love, glass love and stone love.

'The eight kinds of love which have their

correspondence in the heavens are these: twilight love and moon love, rainbow love and lightning love, Mars love and Rāhu love, cometary love and sun love.

'Eye love, ear love, and love that rests upon the tongue, skin love and nose love, heart love and love which takes its name from consciousness of love, such are the eight derived from our perceptions.

'Bull love, stallion love, and the love of the chameleon, ram and dog and ass love, cat love and elephant love: these names are borrowed from four-footed beasts.

'The eight bird loves are: parrot love, swan love, and the love of doves, peacock and sparrow love, cock love, green-billed cuckoo love, and pheasant love.

'The eight modes of love of the body are: hair love, bone love, nail love, hand love, tooth love, foot love, earring love, and love of the tilaka (caste-mark).

'There are also eight loves which take their names from maladies: shadow love, demon love, epileptic and planetary love, Gandharva love, Pishācha love, Yaksha love and mad love.

'And there are sixteen mingled forms which are as follows: flower love, orange love, pitcher and pomegranate love, alcohol and pyre love, erysipilis and leper love, bee love, moth love,

scorpion love and fever love, vertiginous and thought love; and then there is demoniac coupling love, and, finally, there is blood love. Now let me quickly run through this list, that you may know the signs by which we recognise each tint of love's variety.

'Cobalt love is constant if we seek to preserve it; if we neglect it, it dissipates like a puff of air. Vermilion love is rude and gross in nature, but stays if we look upon it with affection.

'If we abandon saffron love a little it becomes joy; but when it grows too great it turns to grief. If we warm carmine lac love it clings more closely; if we let it get cold it does not cling at all.

'Now madder love stays equal with itself, whether we excite or greet it coldly, and thus it is capable of enduring joys. Harshness will keep the orange-coloured love alive; but if it be treated too tenderly or softly it will die.

'Carrot-tinted love will pale and perish in the twinkling of an eye, even if we guard it well; but indigo love endures even to the dissolution of the body, and is infrangible beneath many blows.

'Gold love holds the same polished lustre, whether we tear or crush it, or cast it in the fire. And copper love is bright without a stain, but only if we keep it carefully.

'Brass love grows dull under the breath of a too tender liking; lead love is, first and last and in the meantime, muddy.

'Iron love neither bends nor passes, because of its strength and stiffness; and diamond love is pure and unpainted, unbreakable and natural.

'Glass love is frail by nature, quick to suspect deceit; stone love endures for ever through its own weight, but has no sap nor joy, having no heart.

'Twilight love is ephemeral and durable at once; it has a natural flaw, being dependent on the circumstance and situation of the loved one. Moon love grows cold when it has found its satisfaction: before it is rich in suffering, but afterwards it grows indifferent or forgetful. It is variable in essence, as likely to fade as to increase.

'Rainbow love is a medley of colours; that is to say it seeks its pleasures a little everywhere and changes easily: it is filled with audacious and amusing tricks. Lightning love begins with a caprice, and engenders an affection which passes as it is born.

'Mars love glows like a red coal under the contempt of women; and cometary love is fertile in brilliant disgraces, as of prison and death.

'Sun love burns pitilessly and sorely; it has no thought except of its own increase, like a

'Cat love rejoices to be constantly as near as possible to its mistress; elephant love runs straight for coupling, thinks nothing of pleasant trifles at the door, and will not be turned aside for anything.

'Parrot love is of the house, and lacks both tenderness and sweetness, yet in its mouth lies pleasure: and swan's is a delicate love, distinguishing the heights and depths of passion.

'The love of doves is known by this especially, its lust and tender attachment are so closely bound as to be one thing; peacock love, in an ecstatic contemplation of itself, will ceaselessly dance before the mirror.

'Sparrow love desires the greatest possible voluptuous sum: cock love will share the slightest suffering with its lady.

'Green-billed cuckoo love excels in pleasant babbling, its conversation is a gliding stream; and pheasant love faints not at kisses.

'Hair love waits for eight days and gives itself but painfully to the loved one; bone love comes not forth, so cannot express its tender attachment.

'Nail love endures for a month, and then vanishes little by little; and hand love, though it be great, is never apparent, because the lover hides his heart in it.

'Tooth love finds inexhaustible satisfaction in

playing with betel; foot love falls down before the girl, for little delicate feet are its sole concern.

'The love of a man of humble condition for some very great lady is tilaka love; ear ring love is the friend of dissimulation and tortuous turnings aside; it hangs at the ear of the loved one to gain her confidence and favour: it is unpleasantly given to boasting.

'The love which is like the demon of the shadow pursues its prey in every place, and dries up all that it touches; the love that is named after the ghosts of evil is both self-willed and unconscious; we cannot find the feelings out which govern it.

'Epileptic love for ever wastes itself in reproaches, or falls into terrible angers; planetary love seizes you by the hem of your robe whether the street be crowded or deserted.

'Gandharva love is all for dancing and singing; if you put Yaksha to the door, it will not depart, but try all tricks to enter again by the window.

'Mad love spreads out in chattering whirlpools, unbridled and unbitted; Pishācha love's sole pleasure is in filth, and it makes horrible wounds.

'Flower love is plucked in passing; it is noble and wishes for nothing but to be esteemed. Although pitcher love be broken, it strives to mend its fragments, and so live again.

'The surface of orange love is acid and bitter, but it is filled with affectionate sap within. A love grows up in the heart after many child-births, which is called pomegranate.

'Alcohol love is a momentary drunkenness: when it recovers, it falls again into a thousand doubts.

'Leper love is altogether abominable, and satisfies itself in disgusting ways, and makes us sick.

'Pyre love is like a wound on the tender parts of the body, it bites and deforms the members with its fire, and grows great by magic compulsions.

'Bee love is for ever seeking a new mistress, and dreams from flower to flower. Moth love is dazzled by the shining of its object, and delights to burn its wings; it is heavy with disaster.

'Scorpion love is a cause of suffering and, though it is so soon odious, it cannot be rooted out. Thought love flies on the wings of memory to the loved one, even as it unites with another woman.

'Demoniacal possession attains its luxury in dreams. Blood love grows great on the blood which a humble lover sheds in fighting.

'See now, I have briefly shown you the eighty kinds of love; but, if he keep count of every shade of disguise which love can take, who could determine the number?

'In the first place, it is absolutely necessary for venal beauty to conciliate the friends of him whom she desires to ensnare, since all fine blossoming of an intrigue rests with them.

'For it is by his friends that she shall know her lover's resources and advantages, the special means to take his heart, his character and how he behaves in passion, and, later, in what degree he is growing cold.

'If a rich man desire her and his friends grow amorous of her also, she must not fail to win them over to her cause by sleeping with them in secret.

'The daughter of desire should strive to have the following lovers in their turn, as being mutually restful to her: a rich man's only son, a boy who has been loosed too soon from the authority and counsel of his father, an author enjoying office with a rather simple-minded prince, a merchant's son whose pride is in rivalling other lovers, the regular doctor of some chronically ailing official, the son of a celebrated master, an ascetic who is the slave of love in secret, a king's son whose follies are boundless and who has a taste for rascals, the countrified son of some village Brahman, a married woman's lover, a singer who has just pocketed a very large sum of money, the master of a caravan but recently come in, a rich man

with a taſte for philosophy, a fool who treads in the footſteps of the firſt comer, a wise man drunk with knowledge, and an inveterate drinker.

'When a courtesan is approached by an admirer for the firſt time, she should begin by saying coldly: *I have not the leisure,* for it is human nature to despise what is easily obtained.

'It would be well if she were to colour her refusal by pretending a headache, or some other indisposition which is apt to come on suddenly, and which cannot in any way inspire diſguſt.

'With a very rich man she may begin by rendering officious service and asking no thanks for it, juſt as a wife will. *Your riches,* she should say, but using of course some other magic word, *have acquired the moſt extraordinary hold upon me.*

'But if he be the firſt to show his claws, the woman muſt assume an entirely different character from the one of confiding service which I have juſt advised: directly after the act, she should curse her mother for having sent so sad a fellow, and she need not hesitate to pursue her gallant, even as far as his own house.

'If some man's love for her be ſtrewn with difficulties, she muſt tell him of her passion to voyage to a far land with him; she muſt not cease to kiss him even when he sleeps; and,

while he is only half awake, she must continue to sing his praises.

'Even as she herself snatches a little slumber, she must murmur passionately concerning him, and bring no other name than his into her speech; let her be unwearied in her embraces, but ever resist when he would be the same.

'She should express her desire to have a son by him, and declare that if they were separated she would die. And then, when she has bound his judgment in the halter of these and other devices, she may safely set her hands upon his money.

'Now, while his passion still holds him senseless, she should swallow the last of his fortune as quickly as possible; for as soon as his ardour wains he will become as hard as cooling iron.

'She should remember to ask him from time to time, just after their enjoyment, why he is sad, and, in doing so, she should cross her thighs as if to refuse him: the ripe fruit of a mango, which offers on a bending branch, has little attraction for one who has eaten already.

'If a man has a personal fortune she should hold him a trifle, as long as some of it remains. For, as the wick will burn while there is yet oil, so should there be a little love upon the lips of a woman while there is still a little gold in the lover's purse.

'But when she has sucked out the sap of his riches, and he is good for no more at all, she should throw him aside like an exhausted sugarcane: when the flower has withered and spoils its place among the hair, how quickly the hair itself will let it fall!

'But if, like the winter cat upon the hearth, the lover clings when he is dismissed, and cannot bear to go, certain means must be taken to make him understand; and these should be progressively ruder and ruder, until they touch him to the quick of his flesh.

'She should refuse him the bed, and jeer at him, and make him angry; she should stir up her mother's enmity against him; she should treat him with an obvious lack of candour, and spread herself in long considerations about his ruin; his departure should be openly anticipated, his tastes and desires should be thwarted, his poverty outraged; she should let him see that she is in sympathy with another man, she should blame him with harsh words on every occasion; she should tell lies about him to her parasites, she should interrupt his sentences, and send him on frequent errands away from the house. She should seek occasions of quarrel, and make him the victim of a thousand domestic perfidies; she should rack her brains to vex him; she should play with the glances of another in his

presence, and give herself up to reprehensible profligacy before his face ; she should leave the house as often as possible, and let it be seen that she has no real need to do so. All these means are good for showing a man the door.

' But if passion clogs him to such an extent that neither affront nor outrage avail to move him, then the courtesan should lift her arms to heaven and, without looking at his face, proceed to this declaration :

' *It is four days since the women of the house have had a feast, and yet the house is mine ; once it was filled with pious processions of lovers, once admirable magnificence would reign within it.*

' *What business has a man to run aground in the dwelling of a high-class woman, when he has no money ? How dare a man take his place upon the ship when his fare is lost to him ?*

' *What can a daughter of desire do with a handsome boy whose fortune has flown, and who has not even the energy to go out for more ? Who would keep a fine-looking cow if her milk had dried upon her ?*

' *Surely it is in vain that this wretched youth is prodigal of love words which could only seem sweet to fools : shall the kisses and caresses of a nurse whose breasts are barren give a child strength for growing ?*

' When, beneath these or the like disdainful words, her lover has vanished as the dew before the sun, the woman should immediately apply

herself to a second: it does not matter if she has already put this second to the door, provided he has found a new fortune in the meanwhile; she can hold his heart again if she will take the pains.

'And, when she has many times repeated to the new investment: *You are my all, my heart, my life; the world holds only you!* when she has finally absorbed the total of his fortune, she must cast him aside, as a serpent casts its outworn skin, and seek a third with more gold yet. That is the secret of the trade in a few words.

'These brief instructions admit of infinitely varied interpretation, dear child, according to the circumstance; and it requires intelligence, insight and reflection to make the best of each particular case.

Then the old woman ceased.

6. *The ideal lover.*

WHEN THE MOON GOD, EMPTYING HIS brightness little by little like a lover's purse, had spent his last treasures of light upon his mistress, the dark sky, she hoped no more of him and shut her stars with an embarrassed air, as if she dared no longer look upon him. Thus, as an angry, sleepy girl sends out her ruined lover, she sent away the moon.

Then the god, who had held her in his arms all night, departed sorrowfully, and, as he went, her other gallant, the old sun, showed on the rim of the world. She cast the fires of dawn about her with a harlot's haste, and ran to deck the doors of heaven with blushing roses.

So the sun god came to his full height in the splendour of morning, the ever rich and prodigal and young, a lotus of light: he blossomed and woke the bees, and they, like lechers about the nectar of rose lips, ran out to aspire the freshness of the opening flowers.

And Kalāvatī? She glimmered with pearls, and the bees grew drunk at the scent of her, and droned in the crowns of her hair. She looked in her mirror and saw a night of full moon reflected with all its stars.

She held the red betel in her fingers with a gracious gesture, as a wanton's favourite parakeet, and stood, offering the attraction of her flesh like merchandise, with her mother and the barber tending her.

She moved in a dream of money, money for the house, swift-vanishing money, money that was her heart's desire; it was of money that the doves intoned to her, as they heard the rhythmic chinking of her belt in her walking and gesturing lightly and quickly.

Already Kanka was on the look out for some new suitable lover for her, and had been since the first light; now, without taking his eyes from the wide scene outside, he said to her:

'It is the hour of the marriage of the sun and the blue sky, and lo, the lovers go out from the houses of the courtesans, just as the lamps go out!

'See, Līlāshiva, the penitent, is leaving the house of his Nalini; he was rudely wakened by the singing of the cock; he has avoided the main roads and is taking a roundabout footpath to his cloister.

'Down there, in Bhadrā's house, the parasites are asking each other after their pleasant evenings; they are dividing up the treasure left by the lawyer's son, and will soon run forth to buy themselves dainties.

'Now watch the great and useless Anangasāra sidling up to that door, and Vasantasenā coming out to speak to him: she gives him a picture of the pleasures of her night, but there is no truth in what she says, for I know that she slept alone.

'Matanga, who is the president of a corporation, has broken Rāmā's bracelets and earrings: the girl cries piercingly before her mother, and hides her share in the misfortune.

'Surely it is to drink the cup of reconciliation with Mādhava that Anangalekhā comes here at dawn, for there is a man walking in front of him with a jar of wine, and leading a ram.

'There is Mallikā; she and Arjuna were reconciled last night; they are going out to play in the amusement park. To-day he seeks foolish excuses for not giving her the silk robe she has asked him for; he will have to give it to her tomorrow.

'Over there you may see Kānā with the singer who broke up everything in her house last night because she refused him her bed. Now he kneels as a suppliant at her feet, and she agrees to take his clothes, for they are still quite good, in payment for her pots and couches.

'The merchant Shambhu came to this part last night because it was his turn with Nandā: she has just slipped back from the house of another lover and is telling him terrible lies and swearing that they are true.

'Madana stole his father's jewels and then crept hither to make himself agreeable to the fair Mrināli. She is showing the men who have come to look for him all over her house, but I know that she has somehow hidden him there.

'Ramanī andMalaya had angry words, and then he was impotent before her, through jealousy; now her friends are advising him in his confusion: *Give her a lovely jewel to console her, quickly, quickly.*

'And, see, His Reverence is coming, His Reverence Shambarasāra. His hair is tinted black, but his great age is betrayed by the depth of his wrinkles. He goes to seek the ecstacy of the Yogā . . . at the house of Yogā.

'Kamala, that high and permanent official, has not taken his eyes from this house for a very long while. It is you that he looks at so intently, Kalāvatī.

'And do you not see that other man who is gazing at you, the one whose arms are heavy with gold circlets? Do you not recognise him by his cut and patched and disappearing nose, that sign of an adulterous fever? It is Prapancha, it is the ambassador of Prince Mālava. He is shifting and twisting like a charmed snake.

'And there is that great rascal, Shrīgupta. He is famed for duplicity, he is notorious for

impudence, even in the congregation of parasites. He is expert in all the arts of Kālī, and fertile in pleasing and audacious tricks. He has spied out your new and illustrious mother from far off, and now carries his hands to his forehead in homage and veneration; he has winked, his chin moves in a smile, and he is chanting:

'*Victory, victory to the procuress, to the thrice-sainted Shandaghantā! Her terrible teeth spread wide before a palace lamentable as Hell; they stand forth clear and cutting in her mouth! Her tongue rises and writhes like a steel-pointed flame! Her throat has a fever to swallow the whole world, as if in play! She stands under the rams' bones sacrificed to Shiva and, with a sinister noise of greedy jaws, devours them! Victory to the perfect, to the accomplished, to the dried miracle, yet miracle of fullness!*

'But look, look, there is little Panka watching you, Panka the son of Shankha! The father is cupidity's elected home, and the incarnation of all evil; he has made himself a great fortune, and owns a rich bazar. But it is little Panka, the son, who is watching you, girl of delectable eyebrows, and he is as innocent as the gazelle. He looks like a sparrow hesitating before some attractive piece of dung, does he not?

'It is a silly sheep with a rich fleece and a thick head that your happy chance has sent you: he is gold to the ears, gold well above the shoulder; surely he was created and sent into the world for you alone!'

'Madana stole his father's jewels and then crept hither to make himself agreeable to the fair Mrināli. She is showing the men who have come to look for him all over her house, but I know that she has somehow hidden him there.

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' It is a silly sheep with a rich fleece and a thick head that your happy chance has sent you : he is gold to the ears, gold well above the shoulder ; surely he was created and sent into the world for you alone !'

So Kalāvatī measured the merchant's son with her eyes, and rejoiced, and answered smiling:

'A fool with a confused face, that is exactly what I needed! His neck sways from one side to the other as he looks about him; he has no conception of his own desires; his walk is as uncertain as a drunkard's, and his conversation is like a baby's rattle, incomprehensible even to himself; he conceives that he is at the height of glory because he has on red slippers. A child like that, with all the flaring signs of imbecility, is my predestined prey. He should be easy to conquer and easy to devour.'

'O Kalāvatī,' said the old woman, 'this wonderful rake, this most experienced wanton, who hangs upon your glances, is already doomed in other eyes than ours. See, there is a host of wandering singers and mountebanks about him; they have recognised him as the tender victim of your altar, and each is waiting for a slice!' And then she added: 'Run after him swiftly, O my Kanka!'

The barber did not wait to be commanded twice; he leapt from the top to the bottom of the stairs, and sped from the palace.

7. *How to engage.*

WALKING MAGNIFICENTLY AND slowly Spring came on, and new loves blossomed where his feet fell; and then young Spring caressed their stems with fecundating breath, robed in his flowery ornaments.

It seemed as if the solar god said pensively: *Each loving girl depends for her voluptuous joys upon the goodwill of some other.* And that is why he lavished the life of his rays on the cold countries of the North, where riches are.

The flowers rejoiced in a sweet lassitude and quivered with drunken love, sighing under the breath of the south wind and growing white with petals.

Spring used its regenerating sorcery and raised up Kāma from the dead, the old god of the five arrows, the god of Love, whom Shiva had devoured in his fires of anger.

Now the woods were frenzied with the springtime and shone like harlots; they lisped in the

Great gold rings, heavy with pearl, hung at the boy's ear, and a gold amulet shone in the midst of the jewellery about his neck. His virtuous mother had put mustard grease upon his hair to ward off evil spirits. His carefully-fitting silver anklets were studded with large olives carved from lapis-lazuli. His hand lifted his falling robe with its long fringes at every step he took; and his mouth savoured and chewed upon its well-mixed lime and betel with a strange little sound.

He found Kalāvatī paying minute attention to her mirror; her beauty's plenitude was like a clear night sky, and a collar of pearls laughed with white light upon the rounds of her breast. Doubtless she was thinking: *Why, it is a baby, it will have to be coaxed: what may such a child do in love's tournament?*

And with the young man there came seven parasites such as live upon girls and their lovers, seven of those most notorious idle hornets that buzz about the lotus of lust: they came as priests with their victim, for they themselves had carefully guided him to the sacrifice and had earmarked his fortune as a golden holocaust.

As the youth had learned from these attendants how he should behave with women, he entered as if into his own house, and made himself easy, like an old libertine.

Hiding the half of his nose in his garment, he gabbled off the playful discourses which he had been told were then in fashion, just like a parakeet, and made unseasonable parade of wit he had not got.

Then the bawd Kankālī, seated upon a high chair, began to sing the praises of the parasites, with perfect hypocrisy, in order to win their favour for her daughter.

'This merchant's son,' she said, 'must certainly be rich and fortunate, otherwise he would not be of your company, for you are only intimate, as I know well, with those who labour to mature their natural virtues.

'And in his glow as a lover he must be most agreeable to you, for at this season the young sun delights the exquisite lotus flowers and they bloom again.'

Thus she conciliated the hearts of the parasites, while the floor grew redder and redder with the juice of betel.

Then Vetālikā, who had been Kalāvatī's nurse, and was as black as Kālī, rejoiced at the windfall which this distribution of betel meant for her, and cried:

'It is not here as at the houses of other courtesans, where a famished crowd awaits the distribution of the betel. Our company is smaller and more select, I thank the gods!

'All honour, then, to the excellent Kanka, for he has the stature of a god, and nourishes profound, rare thoughts within his head. O handsome youth, you owe it to the officious cares of Kanka that Kalāvatī, whose favours are most difficult, has fallen with such ease into your arms.

'First let me present you to the son-in-law of one of our neighbouring houses, a man worthy of all consideration, for he has obtained the hand of one of our daughters. His name is Kamala: he sits in the place of honour.

'And this is Mahāshakti, the ascetic, who arrived but yesterday for the feast of Parvan. Once he was kind enough to take upon himself the funeral rites of Kalāvatī's father.

'This is the son of the member of the congregation of Purahita; he guards the sacred relics: and this is Pouremout, the liquour seller, Kalāvatī's paternal uncle.

'These are Kalāvatī's brother-in-law, Mr. Paunchy, and Mr. Wiper, her maternal uncle, and Mr. Wiper's excellent brother, whose name is Silliberry.

'This is the nurse of the child acknowledged by Kalāvatī, and this the nurse's husband.

'This is Kāmba, the son of Bhāgavata, who understands the language of wild beasts, and this is the singer Valetass, the favourite of the king's first minister.

'This is Greedyguts, the cook, a very good friend of ours, and with him are Shard, the potter, Heron, the parasol-bearer, and the coachman Wagtail.

'This is Coupler, the Brahman; the girls employ him to turn the influence of malignant ghosts; and these are Gape, the gardener, and Twiddeloar, the waterman.

'These are Onion-face, the garden porter, Bud, the flower-seller, Harness, the cobbler, and Lovehole, the express.

'We give them all betel when they come here; but we have to send it each morning to Kalāvatī's woman friend, whose name is Devil-crown, and to Mr. Dodger, who looks after her.'

As soon as Vetālikā's dependents had been satisfied in their two delights of betel and drink, they dispersed, reeling, towards other brothels. And they went in high satisfaction, because their rights to the distribution had been acknowledged.

Then the night came, veiled in the odours of incense as if she were fearful of the parasites; for many had remained with Kalāvatī and her lover, and were quite drunk by now and bragging incredibly.

I am the right hand of the prince in battle, said the police officer. *The nation rests upon my pen,*

replied the scribe. *Where I sit, sits the science of the theatre,* cried the dramatist, and the merchant cried: *My scales give birth to gold. My calculations have encompassed the Three Worlds,* shouted the astrologer, and the doctor assured him: *I cured the great King Bhoja.* Then the poet said: *I am honoured by princes because of the beauty of my verse.* It was thus they boasted in their rising intoxication.

But at last, after the final gracious distribution of betel by Kalāvatī, they went out into the street, each revolving how he might quickly get money to satisfy his passion.

Then it was that the gazelle-like girl, whose lotus face still lighted with a smile at the droll memory of her guests, dragged her quite tipsy little gallant by the arm, and couched herself with him. Her bed was canopied, and had cushions upon it whiter than a swan, and a clear silk coverlet.

The lights seemed to grow less in the presence of this lover, who was but a child, as if they were ashamed to look upon him; but in reality it was the wings of an army of bees, drawn by the many flowers, that made them quiver, and the smoke of burning aloe wood that dimmed them.

8. *How to break off.*

NIGHT WAS SO WEARIED BY THE WHITE-flashing Moon God's love that she sent him one last glance from her open stars, then closed them and swooned away. The splendour of her sweat was in the dews of morning.

It was then that Kalāvatī came to find Kankālī, and her reddened eyes bore witness that she had not slept. When the old woman questioned her as to the doings of the night, she answered:

'You would never believe, mother, how strange is the nature of that child, for though he is quite little, he is fashioned beyond his years and has all the energy and violence of a peppercorn.

'As he was quite drunk, my servant laid him gently upon my high couch; and the rascal rested there motionless, and snored profoundly.

'Then a curiosity, which any woman would understand, led me to take him in my arms; and I confess that I did so clumsily. But though this enjoyment was quite new to him, he fell asleep at the very moment when it was over, and lay with even less motion than before.

'So suddenly I whispered: *His betel nut is not moving in his mouth!* and was seized by a foolish

fear that he was dead. Dipping my hand in water I passed it over his breaſt, and at once he recovered his senses.

'But he wakened only too well, and began to take kindly to the thing. He made love like a sparrow: you would have called him the incarnation of insomnia. At laſt, after innumerable escalades which left me weary and broken, he lay back and slept till dawn.

'When I roused the desires of this impetuous child, I was lighting a fire which should consume me; I was walking upon hot coals, and knew it not.

'I said in my pity: *So tender a boy will weep!* and therefore forbore to use my teeth; but now my own lip is all torn, see, as if my parrot had been biting it.

'My two breaſts are lolling as if in shame because I coupled with a lad so young; his perpetual assault, strong clasping, and loving games made them as nothing.

'The wavering branch of my body has been rent by his nails in unconventional places; how then shall I hide the scars upon my delicacy, when I have to do with others more versed in unguiculation?'

When she had thus spoken, she gazed on the ground in conſtraint and perplexity, for she was unnerved by her want of sleep. But Kankālī

answered with a smiling mouth, which showed the points of her teeth; those teeth sharp as the desires of the parasites.

'O fortunate and holy innocent,' she said, 'this audacious, thorn-like maturity, of which you complain, is not at all to be wondered at in merchants' sons. They have too many chances of learning from their fathers' shop boys.

'One thing alone is certain, that the child has money about him, which he has stolen from his father; for no one would present himself with such assurance, if he came empty-handed.

'The smallest mouse will frisk and run busily when an alms of food falls down her hole; but even the great elephant, when he has spent his amorous sap and his trumpeting sounds hollow, grows sleepy and melancholic. It is the same with a lover whose purse is empty, whose generosity is all exhausted: timid embarrassment betrays him.

'I shall go now swiftly and talk with our lover, for I must invent some cleverness at once with which to frighten those parasites away from here. The abundant honey which this merchant's son provides will be enough for you, but not for a whole troop of cumbersome and idle hornets.

'This body we girls put up to auction is a true treasure and a source of riches; but why should

we waste the careful profits of our labour on sons of assistant bawds ?'

Then the wise Kankālī went without loss of time and, finding the lad in the bedchamber, spoke confidentially to him :

'Did the night go well, my little one ? Did she smile as a white waterlily, and bring you all your desire ? You ought to be put in prison, you bad boy, for stealing my Kalāvatī's heart so swiftly.

'She has walked without wavering over an ocean of young lovers, and now, see, she hangs at your skirts for fear of losing you : my little Kalāvatī, to solicit whose graces her lover from the South country, her lover, the great King Bhoja, has sent ambassadors.

'But doubtless this union was planned in the past lives of both ; for, if Destiny had not intended it, whence comes my prescience that it will be you who shall pay me the last filial rights when I pass from this into another world ?

'Yet there is one dangerous obstacle to your sweet coming together, and it ceases not for a moment to concern my mind. I refer to the band of parasites ; for it is as difficult to rid our house of them as to disentangle a thorn tree from its thorns.

'Their poverty is their own, and their riches

are the riches of another ; therefore, when they have eaten and drunken your substance, they will find no task pleasanter than to denounce your loves, and to hand you over to your father, as one whom it were good to keep in custody.

'But if you will consent to remain invisible but for one day, this whole crew shall be deceived and cast into despair, and will disperse.'

To this the merchant's son replied with a simplicity inseparable from his years. 'You are right, my mother,' he said, 'and your words betray a tender interest in me.

'I have something tied in the corner of this cloth ; I took it from my father's shop. I leave it with you now, as it may help towards the pleasure and adornment of your daughter.'

So saying, the child gave her the inestimably valuable gems which he had subtilized from his father, and then docilely left the house, taking a hidden path which the old woman showed him. Along this he walked sufficiently far, beyond the palace with its great flat roofs, to be safe from any researches which the parasites might make.

Kankālī at once dissimulated her delight, and assuming a mien of hypocritical despair, rejoined the parasites. In a voice broken by confused sobbing she said to them :

'Gentlemen, gentlemen, you have been lifelong friends of mine, you are my natural allies, and have had loving kindness and benevolent help from me . . . how could you so suddenly turn round and bear yourselves thus evilly towards me?

'Why did you abuse my boundless confidence? Why did you bring that wild urchin, that brigand's son, into a house you knew to be full of jewels, and pass him off to us as a merchant's heir?

'If the other courtesans egged you on, and an irresistible desire possessed you to make game of us, need you have shown such brute malignity? Need you have risked the murder of my daughter?

'When Kalāvatī fell at last into a weary sleep, that surprising lover of yours took off her two bracelets and her collar of pearls, and fled unnoticed with his booty.

'Each day we hear of women, dwelling in the love markets of every city, who are butchered by ruffians of this kind, just for their jewels. It is only by the special favour of some guardian god that Kalāvatī has escaped from this adventure with her life.

'If the law should come to meddle in the matter, on whose head will the fault be proved? Who but you, gentlemen, will be held responsible

for this absconding assassin? And are you in a state to be his bond?

'Ye gods, how terrible is this iron century, when a troop of dear friends, men sheltered and at ease, conspire together for the taking off of one poor woman!

'Who shall delve into the strangeness of the human mind? Who shall read the secret dispositions of the soul upon the palms of the hands of the unrighteous? Who shall search out the conduct of the false-hearted person, saying one thing and straightway doing another?'

At the end of this most affecting discourse, Kankālī ran hither and thither with incoherent cries, and finally threw herself down screaming into the street. At length she climbed back to vent her anger and agitation upon the servants, whom she hustled mercilessly for many minutes.

So the parasites were stricken with fear, and quite put out of countenance; without waiting to understand, they departed by the lanes which led to side streets, and did not halt to take counsel until they were far removed from Kalāvatī's house.

But, when they had well weighed and considered the matter, they came at last to this common agreement: that they had gone to the

house hoping for a fine booty, that misfortune had surprised them, and that they had been lacking in the presence of mind to combat her. It was evident that they had been cozened by a premeditated plot, woven for their discomfort. What could they do now ?

'We are victims of a judicial error,' said the policeman. 'We never saw the young merchant leave the house ; it seems quite certain that Kankālī herself made him depart in secret.'

'She has behaved like a merchant,' answered the scribe sadly, 'a merchant who wishes to conceal his gains ; but if we run through her accounts we shall see that she has played a trick on us.'

'The whole thing is a worn theatrical gambit,' declared the dramatist, 'but we must give that old sorceress credit for having staged it with unusual artistry. She has made us dance : 'I see no need of epilogue.'

Then the merchant cried in anger : 'I know Kankālī. She is a false scale covered with counterfeit markings. The whole imbroglio was conceived by her.'

'The little merchant's Sun is far from the sign of the Ram just now,' put in the astrologer. 'The burning and evil influence of Kankālī is in the ascendant.'

'She has been drinking too much spirit,'

suggested the doctor, 'and now it is us she puts upon a diet, to cure her hair disease.'

'The life of marriage and festival which we promised ourselves has now all fallen by the board,' lamented the poet. 'Our single and our last resource is gone. O woe, O woe, O woe!'

And with that the parasites dispersed like bees which have been exiled from a flowery garden, each with his load of anger and astonishment, chagrin and shame.

But Kankālī's night was full of thankful joy; she savoured the peace in which the house was wrapped, and listened through the hours to her own applause.

She woke the next morning in an excellent mood, for she had already traced out another combination; to put it into effect, she went down early to the buildings in the market place, and satisfied herself as to the exact extent of the young man's father's fortune.

In spite of the enormous hoard of gold which he had already raked together, he was always to be seen basking at his shop, on the look-out for the least small profit, and ready to snap like a crocodile; but on this occasion he appeared angry, agitated, and full of care, for he had already discovered the depredation of his son.

He sat on a high cushion, and there was a box

between his hands containing an inventory of his thirty millions. His eyes were almost blind, because he had shut them so often to those who came to him with petitions; he was almost deaf, for he had closed his ears so often against his debtors when they wished for some part of the profit he had made by selling their pledges; and he was almost dumb, because so many asked him if he had paid a fair price for the things inside his shop, and he did not care to answer.

The coats of his thick doublet, overlapping an outer garment of torn linen, flapped in disorder; and the mokota, which hung over his naked limbs, was filled with holes and greatly too large for him. He was all the more unpleasant to regard, because, at the moment, he was raining blows with a cudgel upon his maid servant, who had had the impertinence to ask for a little money for the household. When he desisted, he sat immobile, and paid no attention to the terrible cries by which a cat, fastened with a cord, tried to tell him she was dying of hunger.

Kankālī looked at this appearance for a long time from far off, with her skeleton finger to her nose, until she was certain that it was indeed the famous merchant. Then she glided softly towards him and, taking advantage of a

moment when his shop was little patronised:

'Sir, I have something very particular to say to you,' she said.

'Yesterday I made the acquaintance of your innocent and pleasing son. He had allowed certian parasites to lead him astray, and they had taken all from him, both jewelry and clothing; so that he seemed like a young gazelle pursued by the hunters.

'Because I pitied him, and because he was charming, I allowed him to creep into my house, and the moment after, I know not how, he had crept into the heart of my daughter also.

'And the inclination which led her to give herself to him caused her to supplement his pleasures, which more than one king might have envied, with extravagant gifts.

'Now that your son is her master and lord, he is also master and lord of her enormous fortune; for many kings' sons and certain ministers have been generous in their payment for her body.

'As soon, therefore, as I saw my Kalāvatī all foolish with youth and love, and overjoyed by this most suitable alliance, I decided to come to you to place my house and all that I have in personal possession between your benevolent hands.

'I am about to set forth upon a considerable journey, for it has long been in my heart to

visit all the sacred rivers of this land ; and while I am gone it will be your duty to watch over Kalāvatī's fortune. Therefore I bring you all that she has ; and I have sealed it, with due formality, in a packet.

'And now, Sir, I trust that your love for your son and a condescending benevolence towards your daughter-in-law will make you consent to honour the feast which we are giving, according to fortunate custom, at our house to-day.'

When she had thus spoken, Kankālī filled her eyes with tears and fell at the feet of the stone-hearted merchant, for she saw that he already rejoiced at the great advantage which had befallen his son.

'My excellent lady,' he answered, 'what you have told me is in truth a great source of rejoicing ; yet I am distressed that you should put yourself out in any way. We will indeed go down to your house together, if so you wish, but I, whose pious task it is to provide food for others, cannot consent to eat at your expense. Allow me to provide payment for the common repast. I will give you the money at once.'

So saying, he gaily put a rupee and a half into the old woman's hand, so that she smiled to herself. Then he went down with her to dinner. He found his son busied by joyous love games with his darling, and was enchanted to see the feast which was to cost him so little.

When he had taken part in the banquet and drunk much spirits, when he was all perfumed with impressions of camphor and cardamom, he said to Kankālī:

'I will make myself responsible for all reasonable daily expenses, but you must take care to avoid considerable or undue cost.'

With that he returned to his own place, his heart beating high with hope, for he thought that he had found an inexhaustible mine to be exploited. There is but one way to cheat an avaricious man, and that is to bait your hook with an illusion of gold.

Next day, in order to test his disposition, Kalāvatī sent her own servant to the false old fellow to draw, if she could, the daily expenses from him.

The woman was absent for a long time, and when she returned, she said to her mistress with a laugh: 'Your father-in-law has sent you rich and abundant provision. Rejoice and divide now, and invite your friends!

'I have brought you one measure of oil and two measures of powdered salt. When the old hunks gave me this exquisite present, he frowned until the whole of his face was twisted, and snarled at me: *Here is oil and salt. I have no vegetables. Do you think a lover must give a daily lakh to his sweet mistress?*'

So saying, the servant showed what she had brought, scornfully spat upon it many times, and then cast it far away from her; finally she rubbed her eyes, as if they had been dirtied by looking upon so sordid a miser.

Next day Kankālī took it upon herself to go down to the old man, for her rich imagination had discovered a handy way to cheat him.

She had caused two coffers to be made of exactly the same size and appearance, and had sealed them with identical seals: one contained jewels, and the other common pebbles from the stream.

When she came to the door of the merchant's shop, she stayed in the shadows of the cotton stuffs and garments which hung there, and, keeping the two coffers hidden beneath the full of her robe, addressed the merchant.

'A star is upon me which makes me put forward my journey to Benares, but I have not the necessary sum in money for my pilgrimage.

'The jewelry in this coffer is of great worth, and I know you are the man to look after the goods of a woman and her child, as if they were your eyes.'

She showed him the jewels and then, after fixing the seal anew, set the coffer down in front of her, while she made her request with a multitude of unrestrained gestures and a torrent of words.

'I shall need a lakh for my journey and am ready to leave this pledge for it,' she said. 'I count on you, O friend, for my temple, my fodder, and my food expenses.'

Covering her actions with these and other playfully exuberant expressions, she adroitly changed the coffers, received a lakh of rupees in ready money, and returned to her house.

There she told Kalāvatī that she had been unable to obtain any assistance from the merchant, so the girl went out upon the roof of the palace and held this long conversation with the son of Shankha:

'I gave you my heart with very little thought; but now, though I try to be reasonable, I cannot call it back to me again. You are rich, and yet you will one day marry, as have all the others; that is my grief and care.

'For though a wife could not be delightful for more than one day, and though the enchantment passes when a woman becomes a mother, men will still hurl themselves over the brow of marriage, with a rash and sightless ardour.

'What loving satisfaction can be hoped for from a lawful wife? Swiftly her firm youth passes to nothing by successive childbirth, and she lacks the erotic practice of a daughter of joy. She makes no attempt to brighten her husband's existence, either by charming con-

versation or provocative jests; her sole art is the instigation of eternal quarrels.

'On the other hand, there is no man who may not find pleasure with a daughter of desire, for her life is bent on uplifting the hearts of lovers. She finds her own satisfaction in her amorous business, and is always and completely scented. The felicity of love is her unique delight; her smile never changes, and she can flirt for ever without losing her grace.

'I must make assurance for myself; you must sign me deeds saying that you have received a great sum of money. Your name upon them will be as the little goad to an elephant driver, with which he can force his charge to the left or right.'

As soon as he received this reprimand from the all-beautiful, the boy signed an acknowledgment of an enormous debt to her, and named as his surety Vikramashakti, the nephew of the king's first wife.

But this was not sufficient: Kankālī came to him next morning as he still lay in the bedchamber, and said with tears of hypocritical sorrow upon her face:

'My daughter has consecrated the fairest days of her youth to you, but the flower of a woman's blossoming is so impermanent a thing that none may see it vanish.

Daughters of joy are like a young breast; for a young breast feels a great fire, and then the fire dies down, grows languid, and has gone! . . Thanks to the profit which she had taken from the lessons of that astonishing procuress, Kalāvatī pocketed all the fortune of Shankha as soon as he came to die, and then shone like a bright flower among the courtesans.

Now you have learned that ancient benefits
mean nothing to a bawd, and have seen
how she cheats her daughter's lovers;
but, although the gazelles in
the forest well know how
game is taken, they
run head-down
into the
snare.

A COURTESAN IS AS THE WORD OF A good poet, succeeding by an exercise of charm. She has the allurement of toilet and jewelry upon her side, and the gracious harmony of gesture and attitude to plead for her. Her cause is urged by a balm of insinuating perfumes upon her tended body, by careful coquetry, and intellectual grace. She lives by the sciences of matching conversation and of matching colours, by the flash of fortune and the flash of luxury; so that we honour and adore her. She is rich in every resource at her full flowering, each natural attraction and unnatural wile is hers; she bears the lights of well-being and joy upon her face through all her multitude of arduous pleasures.

This wanton little book was given to the light on the first day of the clear half of the month Pausha, in the five and twentieth year, to serve as a safeguard for the treasures of rich gentlemen.

'Here are crevasses where a black race of serpents lie on watch; there rutting elephants abide; these caves are the resort of lions.' It is thus that old, experienced bawds speak of us men, when, in the thickets of the pleasure houses,

they warn poor girls against the ferocity of exploitation. That is the other side.

In any case, Kshemendra wrote this beautiful poem for the advantage of all good people. He did so during the happily flower-like reign of the great King Ananta, whose might has ever remained accessible to the tears of the unfortunate, whose strength is equalled by his charity.

The End.